



National Hispanic Leadership Agenda

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

- American G.I. Forum
- ASPIRA Association
- Avance Inc.
- Casa de Esperanza
- Cuban American National Council
- Farmworker Justice
- Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities
- Hispanic Federation
- Hispanic National Bar Association
- Labor Council for Latin American Advancement
- Latino Justice PLDEF
- League of United Latin American Citizens
- MANA, A National Latina Organization
- Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund
- National Alliance of Latin American and Caribbean Communities
- National Association of Hispanic Federal Executives
- National Association of Hispanic Publications
- NALEO Educational Fund
- National Association of Latino Independent Producers
- National Conference of Puerto Rican Women, Inc.
- National Council of La Raza
- National Hispanic Caucus of State Legislators
- National Hispana Leadership Institute
- National Hispanic Council on Aging
- National Hispanic Environmental Council
- National Hispanic Foundation for the Arts
- National Hispanic Medical Association
- National Hispanic Media Coalition
- National Institute for Latino Policy
- National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health
- National Puerto Rican Coalition
- SER Jobs for Progress – National
- Southwest Voter Registration Education Project
- United States Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
- United States Hispanic Leadership Institute
- United States-Mexico Chamber of Commerce
- U.S.- Mexico Foundation

March 26, 2014

Honorable Patrick J. Leahy
 Chair
 United States Senate Committee on the
 Judiciary
 224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
 Washington, D.C. 20510

Honorable Charles Grassley
 Ranking Member
 United States Senate Committee on the
 Judiciary
 152 Dirksen Senate Office Building
 Washington, DC 20510

RE: The Nomination of Leon Rodriguez to serve as Director of the United States Office of Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS)

Dear Chair Leahy and Ranking Member Grassley:

On behalf of the National Hispanic Leadership Agenda (NHLA), a coalition of the 37 preeminent national Latino organizations in the country, we write in support of the nomination of Mr. Leon Rodriguez to be the Director of the United States Office of Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS) at the Department of Homeland Security. We request that this letter of support be placed into the official record of the Senate Committee on the Judiciary.

Our membership, which represents millions of Hispanic Americans across our nation, supports Mr. Rodriguez’s nomination and we urge you to vote YES on confirmation. As we continue to engage in the urgent national conversation about the future of immigration policy, the nation must have confidence that the leadership of USCIS has both the right abilities and values. As you will discover upon examination, Leon Rodriguez has these requisite qualities. He has had a successful career in both government and the private sector that we believe uniquely prepares him for this important post.

For thirteen years prior to entering private practice, Mr. Rodriguez was a federal and state prosecutor in various jurisdictions. From 1997 to 2001, he was an Assistant U.S. Attorney in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania assigned to the prosecution of health care fraud cases. He also served as the First Assistant U.S. Attorney from 1999-2001, and as the Chief of the White Collar Crimes Section from 1998-1999. In these positions he learned how to investigate and to detect even the most carefully concealed frauds, skills that will serve him well as the head of an agency dedicated to safeguarding the integrity of our immigration system.

From 1994 – 1997, Mr. Rodriguez served as a trial attorney in the Criminal Section of the U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division. Prior to his first DOJ stint, Mr. Rodriguez was an Assistant District Attorney in Brooklyn, NY for six years. As a civil rights prosecutor in the U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division, he led one of the early prosecutions of enslavement of migrant agricultural workers.

He has also held a variety of leadership positions in both federal and local government. As County Attorney for Montgomery County, Maryland, he counseled the police chief and County Executive as they sought to guarantee public safety and develop common-sense community policing policies.

As the current Director of the Department of Health and Human Services Office for Civil Rights, (OCR) Mr. Rodriguez has lead the transformation of an agency that, among other responsibilities, enforces the nation’s health information privacy laws. During his tenure, he

has led the establishment of OCR as a respected enforcement presence in the health information technology sector, adapted the internal business processes to meet ever-growing intake volumes, while at the same time adhering to a high-impact enforcement model that ensures that the most important cases are handled timely and effectively. Under his leadership, the OCR for the first time ever created a national basic skills academy for civil rights investigators that has been attended by investigators from numerous agencies throughout the federal government.

Knowing his personal history as a Cuban-American, we believe Mr. Rodriguez understands and will be devoted to the nation's immigration laws –and bring the kind of judgment, work ethic, and talent needed to run an agency the size of the USCIS. We can think of no better individual to lead the agency with the dual task of extending the hands of welcome to new Americans while working to ensure that those who wish us harm are not welcomed in our country.

Moving forward on this nomination, it is our intent to score all votes associated with this nomination in our NHLA Congressional Scorecard on the 113th Congress. The NHLA Congressional Scorecard rates members of Congress on votes taken in the House and Senate that our membership deems important to the social, economic, and political advancement and quality of life of Hispanic Americans.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "H. Sanchez", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Hector E. Sanchez
Chair, National Hispanic Leadership Agenda
Executive Director, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement